

Trixie Smith



Complete Recorded Works
In Chronological Order

VOLUME 1
1922-1924

document
RECORDS
DOCD-5332

with JAMES P. JOHNSON, FLETCHER
HENDERSON, DON REDMAN, CHARLIE
DIXON, BUSTER BAILEY, ELMER
CHAMBERS, CHARLIE GREEN, A. O.

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RECORDS

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Keith Briggs

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1. Desperate Blues (take 2)
2. Trixies Blues
3. You Missed A Good Woman When You Picked All Over Me (take 2)
4. Long Lost, Weary Blues (take 3)
5. He May Be Your Man
6. Pensacola Blues
7. Give Me That Old Slow Drag
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9. "I'm Through" With You (As I Can Be)
10. Take It Daddy, Its All Yours
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13. Log Cabin Blues
14. Voo Doo Blues
15. Tired Of Waitin' Blues
16. Triflin' Blues
17. I Don't Know And I Don't Care Blues (take 1)
18. Freight Train Blues
19. Sorrowful Blues
20. Don't Shake It No More (take 2)
21. Praying Blues (take 2)
22. Ada Jane's Blues
23. Ride Jockey Ride
24. Choo Choo Blues (take 2)
25. Choo Choo Blues (take 3)

The era of the female “vaudeville” blues singer was a relatively short one dominated by such big voiced divas as Bessie Smith and Gertrude “Ma” Rainey, known respectively as the “Empress” and the “Mother” of the blues. Marketed as the “Southern Nightingale” Trixie Smith did not have Bessie’s emotional range or Ma’s expressive warmth. In her early efforts in the studio her light, narrowly nuanced, voice was not served well by either her youth or the acoustic recording techniques then in use. However she seems to have been much more impressive in her stage appearances where her vocal efforts could be enhanced by her physical presence and where she could, seemingly, employ a small talent for comedy. Her later (electrical) recordings bring out some of those qualities previously lost between voice and machine. Trixie’s story epitomised that of many blacks of her generation in that she was born in the south; in Atlanta in 1895, and moved north to New York around the age of twenty. Before her move she is reported to have attended Selma University, if so she seems to have found the transition from the halls of learning to the halls of entertainment an easy one.

Her first appearances on stage were in the blackface minstrel tradition as she slowly worked her way up to become a featured artist on the T.O.B.A. circuit. She made her first recordings for the much lauded Black Swan label in 1921 and took one of the titles, “**Trixie’s Blues**”, to be her theme song. Although she had no great ambition other than

to keep working her status received a considerable boost in 1922. This happened when the 15th Infantry Regiment sponsored a blues contest as part of their First Band Concert And Dance at the Manhattan Casino. This was an auspicious event attended by Vernon and Irene Castle the white dancers, precursors of Fred and Adele Astaire, who had popularised adaptations of black dances such as The Bunny Hug, The Grizzly Bear and The Eagle Rock in fashionable white salons on both sides of the Atlantic. Trixie won the contest with her eponymous blues and received the first prize, a silver loving cup, from the hands of Irene Castle. Paul Oliver records in “Blues Off The Record” that among those she outsang were Lucille Hegamin and Alice Carter although Daphne Harrison in her “Black Pearls” states that Trixie was described as a “dark horse” being the only black in the line up.

Black Swan was taken over by Paramount who continued to record Trixie although the results sometimes also saw re-issue on the cheap Silvertone label under the pseudonyms Bessie Lee and Tess Ames. The material she was using during the earlier portion of her career was far from being all blues – even the appearance of the word “blues” tacked on to the end of a title was no guarantee that the performance would be anything other than a novelty song or a ballad.

Keith Briggs

1. Desperate Blues	P-161-2-BS 2039	(A)	3:13
2. Trixies Blues	P-162-1-BS 2039	(A)	3:09
3. You Missed A Good Woman When You Picked All Over Me	P-282-2-BS 2044	(B)	3:09
4. Long Lost, Weary Blues	P-283-3-BS 2044	(B)	3:03
5. He May Be Your Man	BS 14114	(C)	2:46
6. Pensacola Blues	BS 14114	(C)	3:08
7. Give Me That Old Slow Drag	BS 14127	(D)	2:51
8. My Man Rocks Me	BS 14127	(D)	2:52
9. "I'm Through" With You (As I Can Be)	BS 14132	(E)	3:22
10. Take It Daddy, Its All Yours	423-2-BS 14132	(E)	2:45
11. I'm Gonna Get You	BS 14138	(F)	3:06
12. 2 a.m. Blues	494-1-BS 14138	(F)	3:16
13. Log Cabin Blues	528-2-Pm 12167	(G)	3:15
14. Voo Doo Blues	529-2-Pm 12167	(G)	3:03
15. Tired Of Waitin' Blues	BS 14149	(H)	3:06
16. Triflin' Blues	BS 14149	(H)	2:53
17. I Don't Know And I Don't Care Blues	1766-1-Pm 12208	(I)	2:49
18. Freight Train Blues	1767-1-Pm 12211	(I)	3:05
19. Sorrowful Blues	1780-2-Pm 12208	(I)	3:00
20. Don't Shake It No More	1807-2-Pm 12211	(J)	3:00
21. Praying Blues	1886-2-Pm 12232	(K)	3:10
22. Ada Jane's Blues	1887-1-Pm 12232	(K)	3:06
23. Ride Jockey Ride	1977- -Pm 12245	(L)	2:55
24. Choo Choo Blues	1978-2-Pm 12245	(L)	3:08
25. Choo Choo Blues	1978-3-Sil 3565	(L)	3:04

PERSONNEL:

- A: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. unknown, tp; unknown, tb; unknown, cl/as; unknown, vln; unknown, pno; unknown, bj; unknown, bb. _____ New York City, c. late January 1922
- B: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. James P. Johnson's Harmony Eight; unknown, cnt; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; prob. Walter Watkins, ts; unknown, vln; James P. Johnson, pno; unknown, bj. _____ New York City, c. March 1922
- C: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. unknown, tp; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; unknown, vln; unknown, pno; unknown, bj; unknown, bb. _____ New York City, c. April 1922
- D: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. the Jazz Masters; unknown, tp; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; presumably Fletcher Henderson, pno; unknown, bb. _____ New York City, c. September 1922
- E: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. Her Down Home Syncopators: poss. Russell Smith, tp; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; unknown, pno; unknown, bj; unknown, bb. _____ New York City, c. October 1922
- F: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. unknown, tp; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; unknown, vln; unknown, pno; unknown, poss. bj. _____ Long Island City, N.Y.C., c. January 1923
- G: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. Her Down Home Syncopators: unknown, tp; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; unknown, vln; unknown, pno. _____ New York City, c. March 1923
- H: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. Her Down Home Syncopators: prob. Elmer Chambers, cnt; prob. George Brashear, tb; prob. Edgar Campbell, cl; prob. Fletcher Henderson, pno; prob. Charlie Dixon, bj. _____ New York City, c. March 1923
- I: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra (17, 19) Her Down Home Syncopators (18): prob. Howard Scott, cnt; poss. Ted Nixon, tb; Don Redman, cl; Fletcher Henderson, pno; Charlie Dixon, bj; unknown, effects on 18. _____ New York City, c. May 1924
- J: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. unknown, vln; unknown, pno. _____ New York City, c. June 1924
- K: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. Her Down Home Syncopators: Elmer Chambers or poss. Howard Scott, cnt; Charlie Green, tb; Don Redman, cl; prob. Fletcher Henderson, pno; Charlie Dixon, bj; unknown, perc. on 22. _____ New York City, September 1924
- L: Trixie Smith, vcl; acc. Her Down Home Syncopators: Elmer Chambers, tp; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl; Fletcher Henderson, pno; Charlie Dixon, bj; unknown, effects on 24, 25. _____ New York City, December 1924

NOTE: This is the first of 2 volumes.

Original recordings from the collections of Werner Benecke, Dr. David Evans, Fritz Marschall, Roger Misiewicz, Johnny Parth, Jim Prohaska, Ernest Virgo

TRIXIE SMITH

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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

AUSTRO
MECHANA

A A D

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